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PLEA

FOR

THE ORPHAN,

DELIVERED

ON THE

ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

FEMALE CHARITABLE SOCIETY.

OF

NEWBURYPORT,

MAY 21, 1822.

BY S. P. WILLIAMS.

PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE ASYLUM.

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THE Managers of the FEMALE CHARITABLE SOCIETY,  
direct me to express to the REV. MR. WILLIAMS, their entire  
satisfaction with the ADDRESS delivered this day, in behalf of  
the Female Asylum, and to request a copy for the press.

ELIZABETH BALCH, Sec'y.

Newburyport, May 21, 1822.

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PLEA

FOR

THE ORPHAN.

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WE admire the magnanimity of the man, who, disregarding every distinction of person, sex, and rank, honors good deeds, and whose gratitude seeks for their authors a present reward. We admire still more the religion, which elevates many of both sexes, and some of every rank in life, to such peculiar greatness, and which alone furnishes us with models of appropriate excellence. In him, who came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and in his disciples of both sexes, we have perceived such magnanimity, and in the religion which he taught, and in this exclusively, we have found such an influence.

Christianity, alone, has marked with precision, the official boundaries between the two great divisions of mankind; clearly defined the duties of their several relations, and wisely assigned the stations which they may occupy with appropriate dignity. It is from this we learn, that the modesty which gives a polish to the sternest virtues of our sex, is essential to the very nature of virtue, in woman. It is this, which while it prescribes a silent and gentle manner, allows, and commends in her, a powerful and extensive influence. It clothes her with a profusion of ornaments, alike costly and beautiful, because they are the adornings of the



heart : those retired virtues, which render her lovely to the christian observer, rather than the decorations and embellishments by which she might more successfully obtrude herself on the common eye. We hear only incidentally, for this, of the names and the services of distinguished women in the infant church, yet they are noticed even in this manner, not without hints of the warmest affection and gratitude, as cooperating with their sister spirits of a higher sphere, in furthering the grand object of the gospel of Christ. This object, as man is regarded, is to make us good and happy ourselves, and having effected this, to secure, through our agency, the deliverance of all the subjects of ignorance and vice and wretchedness around us. Whoever discreetly and delightfully contributes to this end, is entitled to the honorable distinction of a laborer in the vineyard of God, being associated with the various orders of his whole family, in ministering to them who shall be heirs of salvation. Among them all, there is but one ultimate design and interest ; and however remote their present relation, however diversified their powers, however enlarged or limited their sphere of action, there should be the most cordial cooperation, There is equal need, of those engaged in the less conspicuous and more prominent parts of the christian calling. All, therefore, should be alike prompt to give and to receive encouragement to virtuous enterprizes, or to patient continuance in that well doing, to which they have been already excited. It was with views such as these, and under a conviction of the importance of *united* action, the chief of the apostles cautioned the friends of goodness, against all differences which might endanger or obstruct the interests, of the infant christian institutions. It was under such impressions, he sustained





the cause of female enterprize, when tending to the grand result christianity proposes, and claimed from the christians at Phillippi, for those who had embarked in it, the encouragement and aid, which virtuous designs and well concerted measures, ever merit from men.

It is a man of no less consideration than Paul, in a religion of no lower origin than christianity, who addresses us, and in the very language employed eighteen hundred years ago, on an occasion not unlike the present, says to this assembly—**HELP THOSE WOMEN WHICH LABOR WITH ME IN THE GOSPEL.**

It was the sentiment of his unerring pen, if I mistake not, and for this reason it is mine, and should be yours, that every institution and enterprize conducive to the *real* welfare of mankind, contributes to promote the honor of christianity: that it is our duty of consequence to patronize such institutions and promote such enterprizes, by giving substantial encouragement to those who are actively engaged in them.

To illustrate this sentiment, it would be enough, to shew that the religion of Christ comprehends in its object, every thing which tends to promote the ultimate good of mankind. That it is a system of divine charity, proposing terms of peace for the wicked, and providing ample means of relief for the helpless and the wretched. Every where does the gospel instruct us, that God delighteth in mercy—that his love is unconstrained and boundless—that man, even while an enemy, is the object of his compassion—that the Father sent the Son to be the savior of the world—that being independent of creatures, the favor of God is bestowed without any sordid views on his part; without merit and against desert, on ours: and that while the reign of grace continues, this world will remain the theatre of

his active and unwearied compassion. These are the good tidings; and this the evidence that christianity is nothing less than the broad system of charity, which seeks the ultimate good of all mankind. This opinion is confirmed by the animating fact, that God has not merely revealed *his* will to bless us in all this extent, but in order to bind us to cooperate with him, has enjoined it as an indispensable duty, that we be merciful even as our father in heaven is merciful.

We need little christian discernment, to find this spirit of benignity pervading all the doctrines, promises, precepts, and even admonitions and denunciations of the gospel. Whatever be the means employed; the same grand object is pursued, the same result is sought. The spirit of christianity is a spirit of disinterested kindness. Its object, the restoration of man's moral nature to the image of God's. Its result, a full developement of the principles and affections which have governed them respectively.

Charity then, the charity of a God, is the reigning principle of the religion of Christ. The charity of angels and men, the grand mean of adorning and universally diffusing his gospel, of accomplishing its object, and of sharing delightfully in the glories of its result. Such is the view which the word of God has given, of itself and its designs, of its author and its influence. God is love, and whoever is governed by this affection, has fellowship with God. All the executive parts of the christian redemption, directly exhibit this fact. It was to call *sinners* to repentance, the Redeemer came. It was to ransom not the unfortunate but the *guilty*, the Redeemer died. Not to instruct the boastful sage, but to impart to conscious *ignorance*, the wisdom of God, the Savior taught. To loose the chains of satan's captives



and open the gates of immortality to the prisoner of the grave, were the grand objects for which Immanuel dwelt with men. Look at him and his religion, through what medium you will, and you behold prominent over every other, this feature of mercy. Christianity, is eminently a system of consolation for the wretched : for just such a race of beings, as this world has always presented to the discerning eye. A race, poor and miserable and blind and naked, as every man will find, who has courage to look into his heart, and integrity to tell himself what is lacking there. Christianity is a religion, adapted perfectly, to the wants of no *other* than such a race. Propose it to angels, and you do but mock them. They, need not its provisions : they, are above its remedies. None, other than the lost, really need them : none other than the *sensibly* depraved and wretched, can feel their adaptedness to man's condition, nor avail themselves of their recovering efficacy. None, other than men, subjected in their own view to painful vicissitude for their sins, and who with the most distinguished natural gifts and acquirements, are without hope and without God in the world, will justly appreciate the excellence of christianity, and avail themselves of its provisions for their deliverance. For all that is found in any of our race, more elevated in character, more desirable in destiny than is comprehended in the preceding description, they are indebted to the influence of the gospel of Christ. To the true dignity and comfort of such a being as man, in such a condition, what instructions, what institutions have at all contributed, other than those, founded and supported by the influence of that religion ? Cast your eye over that portion of the globe, on which the hand of incarnate charity has either raised or left, no monument of its redeeming



power. Is it but a single family? Where are the children which it has reared to anything better than a heathen's doings, and a heathen's destiny. Is it a province, or a kingdom? Search its legends, write out the fairest acts of its wisdom, its policy, its goodness, and you will have produced little more than a compound of selfishness and folly. The attestation of profane history, and that of our sacred books, is one. It is given us in words of dreadful import. "The whole world lieth in wickedness." On every moral subject, its covering is palpable darkness. Its wisdom is earthly, sensual, demoniacal. Its religion, obscenity, absurdity, blasphemy. Its tender mercies are cruelty. Of christianity, which aims to restore man, to holy purposes and holy pleasures; which makes its way to the habitations and the hearts of its enemies, by unasked kindness, and through the endurance of perils and labors and sorrows; which even through charities administered to the *body*, aims to carry a healing touch to the heart; which assails the conscience in the still, small voice, and by goodness leadeth to repentance; and which even when riding on the whirlwind, alarms the unsuspecting, only that he may take the way of escape; of the genius of a religion such as this, not a lineament nor expression is to be found, in all the pagan world. The institutions which have grown out of *their* superstitions, do not *aim* at the real welfare of man. They knew not what is good for him. Those institutions had no reference to the divine glory. The wisdom of this world reached not, the knowledge of his moral nature. But had they arrived at just conclusions concerning both, they must have possessed affections not common to man, to have framed their rites and institutes, with designs coincident with those of Jesus Christ. To say, however, what is the chief good of



man, was as far beyond their wisdom, as the love of honoring God and doing good, was high above their virtue.

Christianity, not only founds no institution whose object terminates on the interests of the present state, but recognizes none as the fruit of devotedness to her cause, which is not a mean of man's ascent in moral improvement. In *her* hands, the insane hospital, the asylum for the deaf and the diseased of every species, and even the common jail, embrace as their object the real good of the sufferer, as well as the safety and comfort of society. The seminaries of science, of literature, of the fine arts, so far as they are under her influence, always tend to extend our admiration of the Deity; to purify and heighten our social enjoyments; to elevate our moral and religious character and prospects. Those ordinances of God which primarily regard man as a creature of this world, are designed and fitted, to affect favorably his future welfare. Civil government for example, is avowedly ordained, to facilitate the godliness and honesty of men, who without its imposing and impartial aspect, are willing, in all things to live honestly and if it be possible, with all men, peaceably. To every thing she fosters, to every thing on which she looks with approbation, christianity imparts a moral hue and lustre, resembling her own purity and brilliance. Nothing is done, nothing proposed, in her spirit, in which there is not discoverable, something of the hallowed clarity of her founder.

But if the character of every institution is known by its tendency to promote the real welfare of our species, and if whatever tends to this, contributes to honor christianity, how obviously does it become our duty, to patronize and help those who are engaged in enterprizes

of such a character. This is not merely a duty imposed by the law of charity, but the actual expression of such charity. For what avails it to say, I love my God, if I refuse him the service he demands? or, I love my neighbor, if I withhold my aid, which is the only substantial good my love can do him? Without such an influence, love is in word only, and in tongue, and is of no more utility, than indifference. The only full expression of charity, is a keeping her commandments. To adore and praise her *name* only, is idolatry. If we would be her disciples indeed, we must wash the feet of her coarsest and rudest children. Do to others therefore, said our lawgiver while he was giving us the example, as I have done to you. Ascertain, hearer, the amount of that doing, and the spirit of the performance, and according to your ability, you have learned the measure of your duty to every object of charity upon the earth: and if duty be not with you a thing of fancy, then in the returns you make for a Savior's love, you will pledge yourself to every institution, which decidedly subserves the interests of his kingdom.

In the age in which it is our privilege to live, an almost boundless field for beneficent action, is opened before us. The number of institutions and associations, which have sprung up in aid of the gospel, or through the gospel's influence, in aid of human improvement; all of them presenting a specious, and many of them a just claim to our regard, is beyond my power of recollection. To the generous mind, notwithstanding, to the man who has ceased to live to himself, and whose happiness is proportioned to his facilities for conferring the richest favors, and honoring the religion which is both his law and his example, to such a man, this fact is not alarming. It brings to his ear no unwelcome tidings,



no evil forebodings to his heart. The era of intelligent piety and diffusive goodness, is to him, the era of Messiah's rising glory, and of the joy and triumph, as well as *trial*, of his peoples faith. A trial, more precious than that of gold, because always found honorable, to the disciple indeed. For though he glories only in the LORD, he is glad of opportunities to prove, that his glorying is not to be made void. How then can the calls of the wretched, and for no other, is his bounty claimed, become too frequent, too importunate? He can give, only according to that he hath, and with a mind willing thus to give, is accepted. He can part with no more than *all*, for Christ's sake and the gospel's. He can love his neighbor only as himself; and all this he was bound to do in his affections, to prove him a disciple, when such calls were seldom heard, and when they were addressed to his vanity rather than his conscience.

There were genuine disciples, when such claims were rarely heard, and had the better part of mankind known the miseries of the rest, had the christian discovered, how, by his hand, they might be reached and relieved, they would have been long ago practically acknowledged. The darkness is now past. The kingdom of Christ, for which prayer has been made continually, approaches its establishment. The times in which he is to reign in every nation, draw on. His salvation is near to come, and his right and righteousness to be universally revealed. In a voice heard even to earth, He asks of the Father, the heathen for his inheritance. The heathen *need* a deliverer like him. Ethiopia stretches out her hand in supplication. The isles are ready for his law. The sea, whose abundance is to be converted unto him, begins to reflect the image of his banner. The kings who are afar off, bring presents to him and offer gifts.



Even the waters of Israel, again are troubled by the angel of mercy. Stranger and more auspicious still, the warrior rests upon his arms and muses in doubt to find the PRINCE OF PEACE, in the instruments of vengeance and garments rolled in human blood. The watchmen approach the consummation of seeing eye to eye and singing together with the voice, while the disciples of the one God, no longer opposing *each other*, with the word of the common salvation, unite in the practical confession, of its sufficiency to make the simple wise, and join their strength to send its sound through all the earth and its words, unmended, to the ends of the world. By the great engine now in motion, for in relation to the moral machinery of christendom, all are but parts of one stupendous whole, by this great engine, God is raising the river of the water of life to a height, whence every field shall be irrigated, and the productions of the former Eden be forgotten, in the more extensive and durable fruits of that which is to come,

The same God, however, who operates in the greater, is not ashamed to be known, as concerned in the more minute events. Nor are his wonders confined to the sublime in *greatness*. The hand which rolls the planets through their courses, feeds the sparrow. The mind which regulates the complicated movements of the universe, numbers the hairs and counts the tears, of his obscurest friend. From the contemplation of more splendid objects and their powerful claims, the occasion summons me back, to bespeak your interest, in a mere streamlet of the river of God. Condescend then, to those who tread the more retired and humble walks of usefulness, and if it is your happiness to labor in a higher sphere, be in this, also, the followers of God.





But what can I add to the arguments of those generous men\* who have plead before me, on this anniversary, the cause of the Society, in whose name I address you?

Shall I tell you, that the object it pursues, is comprehended in that system of charity which the gospel enjoins? He who has neither mistaken nor forgotten the language of his Bible, needs not to be thus instructed of me.

Shall I press upon you the fact, that a soul in America, is as precious as a soul in India, and without christian instruction and discipline, as much in danger, and no less to *our* shame in danger, of being lost? Need it be said, that an Orphan, in sight of a christian temple, is no less an object of interest and of holy compassion, than a child in the same forlorn condition, in the forests which skirt the missionary cabins of Elliot and Brainerd?

Shall I go further, and say that he who cares not for those in distress and danger, within reach of his eye and his hand, is neglecting the duty and losing the pleasure of christian charity, though he may have peopled the wilderness with missionaries. No, enlightened hearer. These greetings too often meet you, from men alike neglectful of the wretched, at home and abroad, to need repetition here.

Let me rather appeal to your discernment and your better feelings, by stating such facts as I have been able to collect, and leave to *their* eloquence, the power to persuade.

The Society for whom I solicit help, was formed in the year 1803, and two years after, incorporated by the General Court. It was among the first charitable associations of the town. It has the honor of that charity, so generally extolled, which begins at home; which

\* Appendix, 1.

provides for the destitute around its door, before it goes in quest of similar objects abroad. It is *entitled* therefore to the patronage of that large class of society, who insist on such an order of selection, as the condition of their bounty.

The avowed, and I doubt not the *real* object of this association, is, “to rescue from poverty and vice, to instruct and train to virtue and usefulness, female orphan children.” Thirty of this description, have already received the benefactions of the Society, and been successively removed into families of sobriety and virtue, subject to the ordinary domestic services of children of their rank, dependent upon their own hands for the means of subsistence. Eight, still remain under its immediate inspection, entirely dependent on its bounty for food and raiment, and the means both of ordinary and religious instruction. The fidelity with which the children of the asylum have been nurtured, and fitted for the sphere in life, in which they are destined to move, is best told in the appearance which they exhibit, and in the increasing demand for them, by respectable families, both at home and abroad.

The object of the Society, is a noble object; and the fact that it has not been universally approved, discredits not at all, the Society or its patrons. It is the fate of every good object, in the present imperfect and mixed state, to meet disapprobation not only from the selfish, but from the ill informed among the benevolent. The orphan asylum of New-York, formed in 1806, said its most zealous friend, “was feeble in its origin, the jest of most, the ridicule of many, and met the opposition of not a few; but God put his seal upon it, and facts and sense, soon converted prejudice into patronage.” In two years from its establishment, it became a favorite with



the public. A house was erected for it within this period, sufficient for the accommodation of 200 children; and from a subscription of 350 dollars, the sum with which its operations commenced, it came into the possession of property to the amount of 25,000 dollars. It will be long remembered with sentiments of high commendation, that a grant of 500 dollars annually, was early made to the asylum by the legislature of that state. The same good sense and good feeling, have been recently exhibited in relation to the same object, both by individuals and by the legislature of Pennsylvania. Their establishment, of only seven years standing, according to my recollection, had accumulated property to the amount of not less than 40,000 dollars, inclusive of the public grant of 10,000. Since the destruction of its commodious and beautiful edifice, more than 40,000 dollars is said to have been raised in that city, always distinguished for its munificence, to repair the loss.

The Society in this town, unlike those of the capitals mentioned above, limits its regard to *female* orphans. We are obliged to say it is unlike them, also, in public favor, and that though earlier in its formation, we are farther behind them in zeal and gifts for its prosperity, than in population and wealth.

To the institution here, it has been objected, that the town is too small, to render it necessary. But I have yet to learn, that actual suffering, is diminished by the dimensions of the place which it inhabits. I have yet to learn, that it is the duty and the privilege of *large* cities only, to provide for the destitute sufferer. Followers of Christ! Do *ye* say that Jerusalem is the only place where men ought to worship? Were the charities of your master exclusively directed to the poor of the metropolis of Judea, or to them also of the little villages

of Cana and Bethany? It is the fact that such are with us, and not that they are innumerable, which calls for this institution: and the fewer there are requiring succor, the smaller is the expense required for their relief. The *Society*, it should be remembered, have done nothing to create the evils, they are endeavoring to remove. They found these children destitute and exposed, and therefore with generous aim, became responsible for their protection and relief. Shall we betray their confidence in our ability and disposition to help them?

Neither the utility nor necessity of this association, can longer be seriously considered doubtful. The fact, that a hundred widows, and many of them in indigent circumstances, are found in a single congregation in this town, goes far to shew, that the Society judged well of its necessity; and had it embraced the widow with the fatherless, would not have *exceeded* in the duties of that religion, which is pure and undefiled, before God and the Father.

Consider a moment some of the causes for such an association. It is well known, that in populous maritime districts, a greater inequality prevails in the condition of the people, than in those of the same extent whose inhabitants subsist chiefly by agricultural pursuits. The causes which operate to the production of this inequality, and which will always operate to perpetuate it, are obvious.

The mariner, who is dependent on the success of adventures almost as fluctuating as the waves on which he rides, and whose condition is little less variable than the winds which control his bark, however frugal and industrious his habits, affords his family but a precarious support. By adversities against which no foresight can





guard, he and his resources, not unfrequently perish together. His wife is unexpectedly made a widow, sinks into despondency or dies of a broken heart, and her children beg. Often, however, the habits of men, not only of this but of every other calling, are the reverse of those described. Vice, brings after it a broken constitution or premature death, and children in no inconsiderable numbers, without crime perhaps, but without education or means of support, are thrown upon the world, exposed to more than common temptations. Without a friend to help or guide them, they fall into habits of vagrancy, and as a necessary accompaniment, of idleness and its kindred vices. *Female* children in such circumstances if not left to starve, are almost certainly driven to what is worse, the unrestrained indulgence of corrupt propensities, and the practice of whatsoever things are unlovely dishonest indecent and of ill report. Without any culture of the mind or manners, without an early subjugation of the passions to any control, and without stated or useful employment, nothing better can be rationally expected of them, than that they become the drones and the pests of society; useless to themselves, fair objects of seduction, and ultimately the corrupters and seducers of others. Of all the spectacles which meet our eye, none, to a virtuous or even delicate mind, is more disgusting hideous and loathsome, than that of an abandoned female. On the warrant of an inspired Prince, we avoid the door of her house as the way to death, her touch as pollution, and her companionship as hell. To preserve the destitute and friendless, from such dangers and wretchedness, and society from the burden of such members, is of *itself* an object, worthy of all the efforts which this association, have ever made. Yet this is not the most interesting part of

their design. It is to afford them not only restraint and shelter, but the means of such culture, as shall by the blessing of God, render them both decent and virtuous; as shall not only save them from squalid wretchedness but make them *happy*. It is to give to society in them, useful assistants in domestic labor, and ultimately to form and fit them for the station of wives and parents, the helpers of others to the kingdom of heaven. This is the least comprehensive object of this Society, and will any man say there is not utility in the association? that there is not honor in conceiving and executing such a design? Above all does any *woman* think it unworthy of her regard! Who else, will assume the task and responsibility, of thus providing for this class of the unprotected and unfortunate? What other provision for them to such extent, is made, or has been made? In what other way can the objects proposed, probably be secured? Who will vigilantly and hourly inspect their conduct, and care for their souls? Who fortify them against temptation, provide them comfortable subsistence, attend them in all their walks and guard them in all their ways, watch with parental solicitude over all their interests, and qualify them for *honorable* however humble stations among their species? This is a class of beings concerning whom it was said, by him who was himself friendless in the world, and without a place to lay his head, I am come to seek and to save, that which was lost; concerning whom he has given direction, feed my lambs: and concerning all who have heard and obeyed his voice, he has also said, inasmuch as ye have done it unto these, ye have done it unto me. In face of all the difficulties to be encountered and under the pressure of many trials, from those who should have been their helpers, this Society has stood forth a sub-

stantial advocate and friend of the helpless; and when father and mother have forsaken, in the name of the Lord, have taken them up. It is pledged to watch over them for God and the public; to give them such instruction as can alone fit them to pass through life with reputation and lay a foundation for hope, in their latter end. It has learned them to lisp with sacred meaning the name of their Creator, and breathe to him the humble prayer; and to this Society, under God, these children will be indebted, for all the virtue and comfort, of their future lives. We have seen that such an institution is both useful and necessary. It has the attributes then of wisdom and goodness, and must be acknowledged, a child of christianity. Its object, like that of all christian institutions, is not to excite the vacant gaze and useless admiration of the world, or ostentatiously display the glory of female enterprize, but simply to do good; to promote the real welfare of society and the highest interest of the wretched. Instead of considering it a *reproach* therefore, to those who have cordially embarked in it, we rather wonder at those of the sex, who esteem it not among their highest honors, to be found in the list of its patrons and benefactors.

I said there was wisdom and goodness in this institution, and those only will doubt it, who suppose its object is, to raise these children above the sphere which providence has assigned them, rather than to aid them to move in that sphere with ability and profit. In regard to goodness, we need only perceive the *maternal* character of the institution, and the fruits it has already produced, most solemnly to award it this eminent distinction. Who has not felt it a blessing, to have been placed under the fostering care of a governess, who commands with tenderness of affection, in-

structs with assiduity and patience, and guards and guides, with all the scrupulousness of a religious mind, while she continually commends her pupils to the divine regard, in the availing intercessions of a pious heart. To such a governess, the early years of some of us were indebted, for most of their profit and pleasure.

Christian Parent, is not such the inheritance you would chuse for *your* children and your children's children, should it please God to cut them off from the fountain of maternal tenderness, without a friendly roof to which to flee, for shelter and a home? In foresight of such an event, would you not acknowledge the hand of divine goodness, in providing a refuge such as this? It is to the members and patrons of such societies the eye bears witness when it sees them, because they deliver the poor that crieth, the needy and the fatherless who have none to help them. It is for this, the names of the Lady Glenorchy, Graham, Ralston, and their associates, will be as ointment poured forth, so long as the rescued child of want shall live on earth, and good deeds be remembered in heaven.

But it is said, the whole management of this institution, is entrusted to *females*. And who beside are fit to be the confidants and guides, of females? I envy not the heart of that husband, son or brother, who does not feel its interests, safely lodged in the hands of the wives, the daughters, the mothers in Israel. Solomon said, many centuries ago, and the sex in *our* age can suffer little by comparison with it in his, Every wise woman buildeth her house. Is a combination of the wisdom of *many* such minds, unequal to the superintendence and direction, of an asylum such as this? There is no hazard in affirming, that placed in their circumstances, the good accomplished by the directors of this Society, will





bear comparison with that effected by *any* combination of human wisdom. On an income whose average amount has been less than 350 dollars a year, they have provided for the children under their care, every necessary of life, including books and tuition, as well as food and clothing.\* They pledge themselves to continue the same economical arrangement, and will probably hereafter support their charge, at the moderate expense of one dollar and twelve cents each, per week. A sum not more than five times the amount paid by the town for each of their female children, for the single item of tuition. Who, has done as much, at less expense? What family in the commonwealth, even in its alms houses and hospitals, can furnish better evidence of good management or proof of greater vigilance and fidelity, than is uniformly exhibited by these children in their health, neatness, subordination, and mental improvement as well as progress in the practical knowledge of domestic business? He that condemneth the just, no less than he who justifieth the wicked, is an abomination to the Lord; and *he* will not be likely to escape the imputation who judges this Society, on partial information, and with an illiberal spirit.

God has smiled on this institution. He has qualified its friends to cherish it, under reproaches and discouragements from which any other than resolute and generous spirits would have shrunk. It has been supported only by the persevering labors and patient continuance of its members, in stated as well as occasional contributions. He has suffered no acute disease to invade the asylum, nor from its foundation, has one of the number of its members, ceased to be a living witness to the importance of its establishment, and the utility of its influ-

\* Appendix, 2.

ence. Few, if any, it may be added, are known to have done discredit to its instructors and guardians, and none, who have received its benefits, will be so ungrateful, as in no way to contribute to its future prosperity ; certainly none among *them* to whom it shall be made the gate to heaven.

But why, it is time to ask, should this Society be so limited in its operations ? Why should it be compelled to refuse a place of refuge to any native foundling, wanting its protection and care. Is there not wealth enough to supply the means of relief to every proper object of their charity ? Or is there too little christian compassion, in this elevated community ? Surely it will not be pretended, that on *such* compassion, any portion of our suffering race advance a fairer claim than destitute orphan children. None appeal more impressively to the feelings of our common nature. The claim of none, to pity, is more powerfully enforced by the example of him, whom we address as the God of the widow and the Father of the fatherless.

Is there present, a Priest or Levite who doubts, or who chuses to make himself a stranger, to the children this day presented him ? Children ignorant of their own dangers and unable to plead their own cause. Let him listen to Christ's benediction of the less pitiable children of his embrace, let him read his parable of the good Samaritan, and pass by them unfeelingly, if he can.

Having seen that it is the tendency of this institution to promote industry frugality and the other domestic virtues ; that it is an antidote to vice and wretchedness ; and that, by its direct influence in fixing the principles of religion and qualifying the pupil for the important station of wife, mother and friend, it subserves the best interests of society and the highest welfare of the



individual; it must be obvious that all its faithful members, are laboring with us in the gospel. The object of this Society and that of the christian minister, however it may differ in comprehensiveness, and in the mode of accomplishment, is one. The friend of the one, of consequence, if consistent with himself, is the friend of both.

HELP THEN THESE WOMEN, ye who are not ashamed of the gospel.

Help, sons of AFFLUENCE and PLENTY, who have no children of your own or none who have not a competence. Offer them your purse; do something worthy of men, charged by the God who maketh thee to differ, to be rich in good works, willing to distribute, ready to communicate.

Help for GRATITUDE, ye whom God has fed all your life long, with the richest dainties of the earth and of the sea.

Help for FEAR, ye whose children after all your labor and policy, may by one revolution of the wheel of providence, be glad to find a place in this asylum of the destitute.

Help, ministers of Jesus, they labor with *you* in the cause of public virtue and morality, of human comfort and the kingdom of God.

Help, O thou God of christians, shield of the stranger and friend of the destitute, help this feeble band, who would cooperate with Thee, and while the dew of heaven descends on other christian associations, let not *their* fleece be dry.

Let each of this community consent to do his duty, and this stunted plant shall become a tree, extending its roots and spreading forth its branches to give to all that need, the threefold benefit of protection, sustenance and wisdom. The cry of these children, unable intelligibly

to supplicate for themselves, is written for them in *sacred* language. Consider and behold our reproach. Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens. We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers, are as widows.

Hearers! this institution should be honorably supported. Economy requires it. There is no way of saving the money; necessarily expended for the indigent, less precarious, than that which makes charity the hand-maid to industry. This too, is the only way to foster self-respect in the *children* of honest poverty. How much greater must have been the ultimate expense to this town, of the 38 children provided for by this Society, had they been left to the ordinary courses of the vagrant, exposed to the formation of those vicious habits, which bring disease helplessness and crime in their train, and as the unavoidable result, confinement for life to the alms house hospital or prison? By becoming their *early* guardians and guides, this Society has. prevented much waste, both of morals and of property, perhaps is destined to save the town from another conflagration.\*

May we not safely affirm that this institution *will* be supported. Self-love requires it. Our families need females of such qualifications as are given to those who are trained in its school, for their domestic comfort. They are exposed to incalculable evils by employing such, as do not possess them.† The necessity for such services as honest and capable domestics are able to render, arises out of the different circumstances of society, which heaven has ordained to be perpetual. By this ordination, often ignorantly or impiously regretted, the rich for many of their domestic comforts, will always be dependent on the poor. In training up these children,

\* Appendix, 3.

† Appendix, 4.



therefore, to frugality, neatness, and a regard to moral principles, as well as the business of housewifery, we bless ourselves and our neighbors, as well as the subjects of our bounty. We make of them, by a practical conversion, a most valuable class of our community.

This institution *must* be supported. HUMANITY requires it. Shall gold and the little attention from us, necessary to its prosperity, come into competition with the interests and the duties of humanity? The lady who paid from her private purse, a hundred and fifty dollars, for the redemption of the little Osage captive, has furnished us with better hopes. The sex will not allow such forlorn children to become outcasts, if humanity only, be the actuating motive. They are objects of pity. They are unfortunate. It is not their *crime* to have descended from men of broken fortunes, or from weak, or wicked, or improvident parents. They ought not to be neglected. They must be sustained and comforted.

The HONOR of the TOWN, requires it. Its reputation, like that of every other town in like circumstances, depends in no small degree, upon the flourishing state of its humane and charitable institutions. The neighboring towns of Salem and Portsmouth, to the time of their last printed reports, have furnished us worthy examples. The first, for thirteen years from the foundation of its asylum, including widows and orphans, received on an average more than 900 dollars annually, in addition to very liberal donations in materials for cloathing;\* and since that period, has added a thousand dollars, to the Society's fund. In Portsmouth the average amount of contributions, added to the sum received from annual subscribers, to the year 1815, was 476 dollars annually ;

their expenses, generally 570. In a single legacy the asylum received 500 dollars, and by the donation of seven individuals, 761 dollars.\*

We are to decide the questions, on this view of facts, will we be characterized by the spirit of virtuous emulation? Will it do us honor, to suffer this institution to fail?—The representation which an abandonment of it, would give of our moral character, would be, in my view, a disgraceful representation. Who among its inhabitants is willing the town should sustain it?

The Society anticipates some uncommon exertions in its behalf, the present year; and while it attaches much importance to your annual contributions, indulges the hope, that such as cannot be present on this anniversary, or who prefer a different mode from that adopted, of contributing to its aid, will devise some liberal and efficient means of swelling the amount of its fund. Let female charity continue to do honor to female tenderness and consistency and this Society, increasing in numbers and exertions, will soon extend its blessing to every object, of its appropriate solicitude.

This institution shall unquestionably be sustained; for in the last place, CHRISTIANITY requires it. No enlightened and unprejudiced disciple, will be deaf to the cry, which has come up into his ears. The cry of creatures ready to perish, because, out of this Society, they have none to succor them. It is a popular sentiment, and I mean not to controvert it, that he who makes two blades of grass to grow, where but one grew before, deserves well of his country and of man. But if to redeem a swamp, or increase the productiveness of a farm, be worthy of such an eulogy, how much more the operation, which redeems the moral wastes we have survey-

\* Appendix, 6.

ed, and converts sources of human misery and ruin, into streams of health, refreshment, and salvation! Is it conceded, that this is, on christian principles to do good? Then recollect, that to him that knoweth to do good and doth it not, to *him*, it is sin.—Go forward then, daughters of Charity, undiscouraged in well-doing, steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. We covet the pleasure of saying to this Society, while at the same time doing honor to others, many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Conducting all your concerns with fervent prayer and humble reliance on him, who alone gives success to the holiest enterprize, you will, in the proper time, see the fruit of your labors, and be satisfied with your reward.

The earnestness, with which I have urged this subject on your attention, may seem to exceed its magnitude. If such be the fact, the former prejudice against the institution is a sufficient apology. But this christian charity *ought* to interest us, no less than a share in the blessing of them who are ready to perish. Have not you then as well as I, has not every member of this community, a deep interest in it? Or will the obligations of this Society and their advocate be remembered at the bar of God, and the duties of those whose aid we supplicate, be forgotten? There, the author and judge of our faith, will acknowledge our supply of the wants, of the most insignificant among the redeemed, a service done to him. There too, it will be effectually learned, that such as have withheld their help, have withheld it, from the Lord. Live, beloved hearer, and act in faith of these truths, and I am sure you will fulfil every reasonable expectation. You will confer daily benefits on the world, and furnish a source of reflection for *yourselves*, of which you shall never, no, *never* be ashamed,





## APPENDIX.

THE following HYMN, composed for the occasion and sung on the 19th anniversary of the Society, is inserted by particular request.

POWER supreme ! enthron'd above,  
Source of Virtue God of Love !  
In whose Pity all things share  
Hear a helpless Orphan's prayer.

Left alone the world to roam,  
Lost to Thee and lost my home,  
Mercy heard, and ever free  
Sought, and bound my heart to Thee.

When forsaken of my kind  
Faint my heart and dark my mind,  
Thou who hear'st the ravens cry  
Turn'd on me her pitying eye.

In a *female* form she came,  
By a Savior's powerful name  
Taught to feel, to love, to give ;  
Saw, and wept and bade me live.

Now again a Mother's voice  
Makes my trembling heart rejoice,  
Now a more than Mother's care  
Guides my steps through ev'ry snare.

Open LORD thy gracious ear  
For thy love and mercy hear ;  
If thy pity still I share  
Hear O hear the Orphan's prayer.

When beneath the adverse storm,  
Sorrow threats or bows *that* form  
Stooping in a Savior's name,  
Me to save from want and shame.

Then thou God of peace be near,  
Stay or wipe the starting tear,  
Then to *her* thy mercy be  
What her mercy was to me.

When thy foes from Virtue's way  
Tempt her doubtful feet to stray,  
Holy Spirit ! then descend  
Guide and guard the Orphan's friend.

When our tears bedew her urn  
When like us *her* offspring mourn  
Shield of goodness ! then defend  
The children of the Orphan's friend.

## I.

THE following List contains the names of all who have preached on the anniversary of the Society.

1804, Rev. Doct. DANA,	1813, Rev. J. CODMAN,
5, — JAMES MORSS,	14, — Doct. DANA,
6, — Doct. POPKIN,	15, — J. TUCKER,
7, — JAMES MILTIMORE,	16, — J. MORSS,
8, — Doct. PARISH,	17, — L. WITHINGTON,
9, — Doct. BUCKMINSTER,	18, — W. F. ROWLAND,
10, — E. HUBBARD,	19, — H. BLATCHFORD,
11, — M. STUART,	20,
12, — A. ABBOT,	21, — L. F. DIMMICK.

## II.

THE Table below, gives a view of the Receipts on which the preceding statement is founded. Since the statement was made, it is found that the product of the Society's fund, about 60 dollars annually is not included in the estimate of its expenses.

<i>Amount of Collection after Serm</i>		<i>Amount of Subscribers Tax.</i>	<i>Amount of Collection after Serm.</i>		<i>Amount of Subscribers Tax.</i>
D. C.		Dols.	D. C.		Dols.
1803,	—	260	1813,	63,04	204
4,	210,00	294	14,	42,70	186
5,	121,33½	272	15,	49,13	198
6,	119,39	264	16,	53,25	192
7,	120,00	274	17,	30,46	176
8,	94,00	256	18,	31,12½	160
9,	131,40	236	19,	54,11	148
10,	57,14	230	20,	—	146
11,	93,85	264	21,	33,12	162
12,	56,22	238			

The donations which are to be added to the above sums average 52 dolls, a year, giving a total of 6508 dolls. and 27 cts. expended by the Society.

## III.

THIS remark, is not without meaning. The parents of the unhappy boy executed at Salem in May last for Arson, have repeatedly assured me, that his crime and consequent execution, were to be surely traced to his association with females of dissolute character.

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## IV.

THE evils alluded to, are deeply and extensively felt in countries older than our own, and have given rise to Societies whose sole object is to encourage the worthy, and prevent the employment of unfaithful domestics. Is it not better, to provide as far as possible an antidote to those evils than to suffer by our negligence, the necessity of a resort to so invidious a mode of cure?

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## V.

FOR the details whence this account is made up, see Appendix to Professor Stuart's Sermon before the Society in Salem, 1815.

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## VI.

FOR particulars, see the printed account of the Female Asylum, Portsmouth, N. H. 1815. Since that account was published the Society in Portsmouth, for reasons which I am unable to state, has ceased to be an example, such as its own members would be willing to recommend.—  
 “Ye *did* run well, who did hinder you.”

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## FORM OF A BEQUEST.

*I give to the Managers of the Female Charitable Society of Newburyport, ——— dollars, for the purposes of said Society, for which, the receipt of its Treasurer for the time being, shall be a sufficient discharge.*





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